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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

UNION

AND

MOUNTAIN SPRING

DIVISIONS

OF THE

SONS OF TEMPERANCE,

AT HILLSBOROUGH,

ON THE

Fourth of July, 1850.

~~~~~  
BY SAMUEL F. PHILLIPS.  
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PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE TWO DIVISIONS.

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HILLSBOROUGH:

PRINTED BY DENNIS HEARTT.

1850.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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Hillsborough, 13th July, 1850.

DEAR SIR :

The Union and Mountain Spring Divisions of the Sons of Temperance, at their meeting on the 5th and 6th inst., unanimously adopted resolutions expressing their warmest thanks for the very interesting and instructive address with which you favored them on the 4th inst., and appointed us to request a copy of the same for publication.

By complying with the request of the Divisions you will not only confer a favour on them, but on us as individuals.

Yours, very respectfully,

ALEX. WILSON.  
ROBT. BURWELL,  
E. A. R. HOOKER,  
J. WITHERSPOON,  
WM. NELSON,  
A. C. MURDOCK,  
R. H. GRAVES,  
D. D. PHILLIPS.

S. F. PHILLIPS, Esq.

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Chapel Hill, July 19th, 1850.

GENTLEMEN :

I have the honor of acknowledging the receipt of your kind letter of the 13th instant.

My thanks are due to the Union and Mountain Spring Divisions of the Sons of Temperance for the flattering notice they have been pleased to take of my Address before them on the Fourth : and I hope to be able to comply with their request in the course of a few days.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL F. PHILLIPS.

Messrs. WILSON,	}	Committee.
BURWELL,		
HOOKER,		
WITHERSPOON,		
NELSON,		
MURDOCK,		
GRAVES,		
PHILLIPS,		



## ADDRESS.

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FELLOW CITIZENS :

IT affords me a very sincere pleasure to make one of so large an assemblage of American Freemen, engaged in commemorating the birth-day of their country. It was thus, twenty-five hundred years ago, that the citizens of republican Rome joined in sacrifice and purification and congratulation upon the TWENTY-FIRST DAY OF APRIL, to which tradition assigned the honor of giving origin to their city. With increasing fervor, year after year, did they continue to recall the memory of their early heroes, and of the foundation of their free institutions, until, after nine hundred years of prosperity, a monster of cruelty and degradation ruled their fallen fortunes, and having insulted their renown by electing his horse to fill their proudest magistracy, decreed that his own birth-day should thereafter be celebrated in the stead of that of the Imperial City. With the best auspices of race and of religion, we have renewed the solemn custom under these western skies ; with a worship so pure, a liberty so well balanced, and so rich a heritage of Heroic Memories, that, were it not for this poor human nature which sometimes breaks down within us, we might trust it shall continue until nine times nine hundred years have rolled this Earth, and all that it inherit, upon the very latest time—"in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works thereof shall be burnt up."

I cannot but esteem it a happy omen for us all that the FOURTH DAY OF JULY is so firmly fixed in the affections of the

PEOPLE. I cannot believe that so long as they remember with pleasure the words and deeds of their fathers, they will bring themselves to throw away or to undervalue the great legacy which these have bequeathed. I cannot believe that so long as the proud memories of this day are equally cherished in Massachusetts and North Carolina, in Georgia and Pennsylvania,—that Massachusetts and North Carolina, Georgia and Pennsylvania are willing to sever the bonds which have enclosed them to their joint prosperity and glory without interruption for two generations. I believe that whatever extravagance may pervade the world of politicians; however aspirants from the North, and aspirants from the South may vie in slander and detraction;—even had the great men of the country been as false to the Republic as they have been true;—even had not the illustrious Senator from Kentucky, the brave and good man from Michigan, and the wise and eloquent son of Massachusetts come shoulder to shoulder to the rescue;—the People, claiming this as exclusively their government, and recognizing the fact that the sun in his revolutions of six thousand years has never looked down upon twenty millions so happy and so free, would not have failed the institutions to which they have given existence and strength. It is a day of experiment, and political adventurers are dinning into our ears that this liberty we enjoy is not necessarily connected with any part of this system of States; that its life does not reside exclusively in the arms, the heart or the head, and that they will insure us against any bad consequences threatened by the separation of these parts. That luck for which a certain class of the community is proverbial, may prevent their madness from depriving our liberty of its existence, but we are sure that the country can lose no member; no hand, nor foot, nor eye, without being essentially weakened and deformed. Some excitement prevails, some well-grounded apprehension exists, but the feeling is general that we are sure to do worse by any change which we may make; that it is one thing to pull down, and altogether another

er to build up ; and that however readily we may put out the light we have, no one can tell whence we shall get the Promethean heat which shall that light relume. A wanton child with a hatchet may in a few moments destroy the oak which required the rain and sun of two centuries to bring to its present perfection :

“ A thousand years scarce serve to form a State,  
An hour may lay it in the dust ; and when  
Can man its shattered splendor renovate,  
Recall its virtues back, and vanquish time and fate ! ”

I am conscious, fellow citizens, that there glows within me but little of that eloquence whose spell is wont to detain you upon such occasions as this. I have no power to summon those gorgeous sentences in which we have heard the past history of our country described, or to catch that spirit of prophecy which exalts her future career to a height and splendour hardly of this world. In the absence of ability to attempt higher things, I hope I shall have your consent to consider some of the *facts* which made the American Revolution. If we would arrive at the perfect stature of admiration for our fathers, we must better acquaint ourselves with the detail of their deeds and designs ; and in the mean time, we shall be refreshed by a contemplation of true sublimity—the sublimity and eloquence of lives of labour, of conquered disappointment, subdued despair, of a moderated ambition, and a self-government better than taking a city. We very much deceive ourselves by calculating the height to which our fathers' glory reaches, from the eminence upon which we are standing. We do them injustice by looking around upon this continent of States, these unsurpassed political institutions, this noble religious liberty, this name we have made us like to the name of the great men which be in the earth ;—and then imagining, that *with all this in view* they entered upon that fearful contest. Read their history ; and learn that they were blessed with no such prospect ! Deprived of their rights as English

Freemen; their humble prayers to the British Throne unheard; repulsed from every hope; encompassed with toils; with division in their ranks, and despair in their hearts; insulted, trampled upon, betrayed,—they set their lives in pledge for their liberty, and resolved that they *must fight!* It was only after that fight had considerably progressed, that they determined to strike a higher blow for Independence;—only after that fight had ended, that they looked forward to a permanent Union. Through the dark, dark night they struggled in that deep morass to escape dangers which lay behind; they lost their foothold, wounded their feet, plunged almost hopelessly into bottomless gulfs; still they struggled onwards. But it was only after the mire had been left behind; after they had surmounted the rough and difficult hill before them, and the morning mist and cloud had broken away, that their eyes were rejoiced by the magnificent prospect of hill, valley and plain bathed in the golden light of the Sun of Freedom. Ah! that long lowering day, which passed over Washington and Adams, from September 1774 to June 1790; how did it alternate hope and deep despair! Happily, we have voluminous records of its events; but much that is of the highest interest has been lost forever. That which remains covers so much ground that few will go over it, and those few will close their researches with an impression that the half has not been told them. They will return with a most exalted opinion of the intrepidity and self-denial of our fathers, and with a most solemn impression of the value of their labours. They will know, that with the Pilgrim of Bunyan's Progress, the Patriots of the American Revolution had to pass the Slough of Despond, to defy the Lions in the way, overcome the Devil, break from the enchantment of Doubting Castle, and pass a Valley dark as that of the Shadow of Death, before they stood upon the Delectable Mountains, or looked up into the Celestial City.

The war of the American Revolution did not propose as its object the establishment of our present Union, or even the



settling of our Government upon a Republican plan. Both of these questions were left open, and so far as the issue of that struggle was concerned, its authors might have been satisfied with the formation of thirteen separate States, each based upon the principle of Monarchy. I do not mean to say that those who engaged in this War were not deeply imbued with republican doctrines, or that they did not prefer a Confederation of the States. The event indeed shows the contrary. What I assert is, that the immediate issue of the contest was nothing further than a separation from, or, in the language of the day, an Independence of Great Britain. So it may be remarked that the Resolution which makes this day memorable, was limited to the attainment of the same separation. It is true that in this resolution the *United* Colonies are mentioned ; but by *United* is meant nothing more than united for the War, as in 1776 not even the old and imperfect Confederation was in being. They were united, as History informs us that many weak states have united in all ages of the world, solely to carry on war with better chances of success ; as the States of Greece united against the power of Persia ; but so soon as peace returned, separated, and engaged in war with one another. Indeed, the first battles in the war of our liberation were fought not even for our Independence ; and when that had been resolved upon, it was more than doubtful if the Confederacy could be maintained after the immediate result of it had been effected. If we would have a correct notion of the grounds upon which this Union stands, it is necessary to extend our study of the revolutionary era beyond the Peace of 1783. Much doubtless was done for it on the heights of Bunker, on the banks of the Hudson, and on the plains of Yorktown ; “ the battles, sieges, fortunes ” which the Colonies had passed together, produced a unity of suffering and sympathy which went far towards rendering them *one people*. But much remained to conquer still, and the era from 1783 to 1790 proved that “ Peace hath her victories not less renowned than War.” Bear with me, fellow citizens, whilst by a cursory

review of these events I endeavor to refresh your memory of this important truth.

Since the year 1297 it has been a leading principle in the English Constitution that the People are not to be taxed unless by consent of their representatives in Parliament assembled. The benefits of this provision extended, of course, to all subjects of the British Empire. By a series of acts passed by the Parliament, and extending over several years, we were deprived of it. I instance especially, the Stamp Act and the famous Tea Bill. Our fathers remonstrated, and appealed to the King, and to the people of Great Britain, for a restoration of their undoubted birth-right. George the Third, with that peculiar and unsound obstinacy which distinguished him through life, refused to interfere; and, although we succeeded in raising up eloquent defenders in Parliament and among the people, yet the large majority continued to support the madness of the Prime Minister. It was for this reason that in September 1774 a Congress of Delegates from all the Colonies, except Georgia, met at Philadelphia. This was, as you bear in mind, not quite two years before the Declaration of our Independence. We may well imagine that this Congress contained some bold spirits even then ripe for separation; but such was not the general disposition of the members, nor indeed of the people, especially in the Middle and Southern States. A petition to the King was drawn up; also an address to the People of Great Britain; a Declaration of their Rights as British subjects was framed; and the odious acts of Parliament were enumerated and protested against. The most important movement was the formation of the *American Association*, the members of which pledged themselves to commercial non-intercourse with the Mother Country, and to abandon all use of British productions. I call attention to this step as the first united endeavor of the Colonies to secure their independence. It may be true that the large majority of those who entered into the obligation did not so intend it. If so, it is another example under the proverb—"Man pro-



poses, but God disposes ;" or it may be regarded as shrewdly designed by the few bold men who were looking forward to separation from England, as the sure entering wedge between the counties. In whatever light we regard it, there can be no doubt that it served an admirable purpose as a commencement of the struggle. After a session of eight weeks the Convention adjourned. Delegates from the same Colonies re-assembled at Philadelphia on the 10th of May, 1775. In the mean time the battle of Lexington had been fought, and a tremendous excitement pervaded the country ; an excitement which a few days later resulted in the adoption by the citizens of Mecklenburg county, in this State, of the memorable resolutions of the 20th of May, 1775. Notwithstanding, no murmur in favor of Independence escaped the Convention. On the contrary, although they resolved to defend their colonial rights against the sword of the Government, they actually disclaimed all intention of throwing off their allegiance, and expressed an anxious desire for peace. Another petition to the King was drafted, and again the people of England were memorialized. As a set off, on the 17th of June, George Washington was chosen Commander-in-chief of the Army of Defence ; on the same auspicious day the lamented Warren fell fighting for the Colonies on Bunker Hill, and the last Royal Governor of North Carolina made a precipitate retreat before a body of militia, and escaped on board of an English ship in the Cape Fear. On the 4th of July, 1775, Georgia acceded to the Union. Whatever may have been the sentiments of the county of Mecklenburg upon the question of Independence at this particular period of our Revolutionary History, it is but fair to remark in this place, upon the directly contrary action of a Convention of the State held in Hillsborough in August, 1775, three months after the meeting in Charlotte. In this Convention Mecklenburg was represented by six gentlemen, four of whom had been concerned in the resolutions of May. Under date of the 4th of September, 1775, William Hooper laid before the House an Address to the Inhabitants of the British

Empire, and the same having been read, was unanimously received. I make the following extracts from this Address out of the original published journal of its proceedings. "Traitors, rebels, and every harsh appellation that malice can dictate, or the violence of language express, are the returns which we receive to the most humble petitions and earnest supplications. We have been told that Independence is our object; that we seek to shake off all connexion with the Parent State. Cruel suggestion! Do not all our professions, all our actions uniformly contradict this? We again declare, and we invoke that Almighty Being who searches the recesses of the human heart, and knows our most secret intentions, that it is our most earnest wish and prayer to be restored with the other United Colonies to the state in which we and they were placed before the year 1763. This declaration we hold forth as a testimony of loyalty to our Sovereign, and affection to our Parent State, and as a sincere earnest of our present and future intention." A *test*, in which the subscribers protested their allegiance to the King, was also proposed and entered upon the records, and received the signatures of every member of the Convention. The last day of the year 1775 was marked by the death of the brave and accomplished Montgomery under the walls of Quebec. Early in 1776, the battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, near Wilmington, gained by General Caswell, gave strength to the Whig Party in North Carolina; and in March, General Washington inspirited the whole country by driving the British from Boston.

I have been thus particular, and I fear tedious, in order to draw your attention to the fact that much of the fighting in the Revolutionary War was done without any desire upon the part of many who were engaged in it to sever their connexion with England. In the Spring of 1776, however, other sentiments were heard; and *Common Sense*, a pamphlet by Thomas Paine, showing the absurdity of longer endeavor to maintain our old relations, produced a decided impression upon the people. On motion of John Adams, Congress in

May recommended to the several colonies to establish Governments adequate to their present exigencies. On the 7th of June, Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, introduced his famous resolution for Independence into Congress. It was debated for two days. Being opposed by some of the most distinguished members as premature, it was at length passed by a vote of seven States to six; New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia voting in the affirmative, against New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Carolina, Delaware and New Jersey. The resolution was then postponed until the 1st day of July, in order to insure a greater unanimity. The result is well known. Together with Mr. Jefferson's eloquent manifesto, it has this day been read in your hearing; and in 1850, after seventy-four years, thirty great States hail with loud acclaim the anniversary of that day on which our fathers resolved that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, **FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES.**" Henceforward the struggle was for separation. Our own State bore the brunt of the War in 1780 and 1781; Lord Cornwallis surrendered on the 19th of October, 1781; and our Independence was formally acknowledged by Great Britain on the 3d of September, 1783.

I have already said that the renown of the Fourth of July is not necessarily connected with that of our glorious Union. The struggle for the latter, though in some sense growing out, and a part of the former, was yet, on the whole, collateral, and for some time a sort of bye play to it. A committee was appointed to draw up Articles of Confederation as early as 1776. As soon as these could be matured, four States, of which I am proud to say that North Carolina was one, entered into its bonds. It was not, however, until March, 1781—the same month in which the battle of Guilford was fought, and but seven months before the virtual close of the war, that it was completed by the accession of Maryland, I need not put you in mind that this Confederation was very de-

fective, and but ill calculated for permanence. A struggle for a more perfect Union commenced upon the part of some members of this Confederacy even before the signature of the treaty of Peace. It was carried on with zeal, but with doubtful hopes, for several years afterwards. In 1789 our present Constitution was adopted, and this Republic commenced its high mission upon earth.

I trust, fellow citizens, that what I have said will convince you of the threefold character of our Revolutionary Era. For the first twenty-two months the contest was only for our rights as subjects of Great Britain; and in that we had the sympathy and co-operation of many distinguished citizens of the mother country. Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, Edmund Burke, General Conway, Colonel Barre, Mr. Hartley and Mr. Wilkes insisted upon our rights with a zeal and boldness which did them infinite credit, and gave them an extensive popularity throughout the Colonies. In commemoration of their services, counties and towns were named after them from Maine to Georgia. North Carolina has in this way perpetuated the gallantry of Chatham, Camden, Burke and Wilkes; the three latter at the same session of the Legislature in which the merits of two of her own patriotic sons, General Nash and Governor Caswell, were similarly honored; and in Pennsylvania the names of two of these disinterested advocates have been remembered in the town of Wilkesbarre. The aid of these generous Englishmen, however, we had no right to expect, and did not receive after the Fourth of July, 1776. We all recollect the thunders of Chatham as he blasted the ministerial policy of taxing America, in 1766:—"The gentleman tells us," exclaimed he, "that America is obstinate; America is almost in open rebellion. Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted! Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be made slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest. I come not here armed at all points with law cases and Acts of Parliament, with the Sta-

tute Book turned down into dogs' ears to defend the cause of Liberty. But for the defence of liberty upon a general principle, upon a constitutional principle, it is a ground upon which I stand firm, on which I dare meet any man. Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is my opinion. It is that the Stamp Act be repealed, absolutely, totally, immediately." How changed were the tones in which he addressed the House of Lords some twelve years later! In April 1778, the Duke of Richmond having moved an Address to the Throne, advising the recognition of the unqualified Independence of the American Colonies, Lord Chatham, whom age and infirmity had prevented for some time previously from an active interference with affairs of Government, tottered down to his seat, and gave the last remains of his strength and abilities to its defeat. "I have this day," he began, "made an effort beyond the powers of my constitution, to come down to this House, perhaps the last time I shall enter its walls, to express my indignation against the proposition of yielding the sovereignty to America. My Lords, I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me, that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. Pressed down as I am by the load of infirmity, I am but little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, my Lords, while I have sense and memory, I will never consent to tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions." Indeed, history is compelled to record that some in our own country, who had been foremost in the contest for our rights previously, when affairs took this turn, gradually cooled and became hostile. Although, standing upon our present high vantage ground, we plainly see their mistake, and wonder at and condemn their resolution, we must not do so in terms of undistinguishing severity. The poles are not farther asunder than is conduct like this from that which brands the infamy of Benedict Arnold. They might well wonder at the audacity of those claims which the



feeble colonies were preparing to vindicate with the sword; and, if deficient in nerve, might well anticipate, from the now undivided power of Great Britain, disastrous issue not only to the new counsels, but even to those to which they had wished the most complete success. We will satisfy ourselves with the share which falls to them of that malediction pronounced upon all who, having once put their hand to the plough, grow faint-hearted and look back. They narrowly missed high honour; but an evil star presided over their destinies, and they have fallen upon oblivion and disgrace.

Almost contemporaneously with our Declaration of Independence, was the first attempt to erect a permanent Union of the States. Of all the labours of our Revolutionary Fathers, this involved most trouble and came nearest to an unsuccessful issue. I have before remarked that the War was nearly concluded before the Articles of the Confederation were adopted. For seven long years of exertion and disaster, the only ties which bound the Colonies were their common dangers. Their only formal connexion, if we except such as had entered into the *American Association*, was the resolution, passed at the time that General Washington was commissioned as Commander-in-Chief,—in these words: “Resolved, unanimously, Whereas the delegates of all the Colonies from Nova Scotia to Georgia, in Congress assembled, have unanimously chosen George Washington to be General and Commander in Chief of such forces as are or shall be raised for the maintenance and preservation of American Liberty; this Congress doth now declare that they will maintain and assist him, and adhere to him the said George Washington, with their lives and fortunes, in the same cause.” Very true is it that the formation of this Union is no exception to the maxim that great pains is the price of all excellence. It was with difficulty that the resolution to defend our rights as British subjects was taken; it was with great opposition that our Independence was declared; but the obstacles in the way of the first steps were as nothing in com-

parison with the labour which accompanied the Union of these States. Leading men had looked to such Union as the proper basis of our strength as far back as 1754; but after some examination and negotiation, it was concluded by such men as Benjamin Franklin, that the obstacles thereto were insuperable. Such, in fact, they well nigh proved—under far more favorable circumstances—thirty-five years later.

I shall not detain you with a detail of the struggles which resulted in the establishment of our present Federal Constitution. The injunction of secrecy, under which the Convention which framed it acted, was never removed. Of late years notes of its proceedings, taken by some of its members at the time, have come to light; but they are exceedingly imperfect. From them we can learn that its action was far from unanimous; and it is known that some of the delegates refused to sign the draft to the very last. Among them were the distinguished names of George Mason, Edmund Randolph, Elbridge Gerry, and Luther Martin. Alexander Hamilton gave in his adhesion with the remarkable protest—"that no man's ideas were more remote from the plan than his own; but is it possible," added he, "to deliberate between anarchy and confusion on one side, and the chance of doing good on the other?" Of those who gave their signatures to it we are told that there was probably not one to whom all the provisions were satisfactory. When the Constitution was laid before the separate States for ratification, the heats of debate were yet more violent. Massachusetts adopted it by the close vote of 187 to 168. Virginia, in which Patrick Henry lent all his influence to its defeat, accepted it by a bare majority, the numbers being—31 for it; against it, 29. North Carolina, having at first rejected it in a Convention held in Hillsborough, in August 1788, by the overwhelming majority of 184 to 84, did not ratify it until November 1789, [by a vote of 194 to 77,] more than two years having elapsed since it had first been proposed; and Rhode Island held out until the 29th of May, 1790.

It has become fashionable in these days to represent the action of our Revolutionary Fathers on all points connected with our Independence and our Union, as unanimous. We imagine that the path which they were called upon to tread, although high and difficult, was at least plain. We bring ourselves to believe that the political questions which our own day produces are new in principle, and that had so great a contradiction of interests appeared then between the various members of the Confederacy, as has sprung up in these latter days, the Union would never have come into being. Such is a sufficiently convenient theory for those who may wish to shrink from the difficult duties of the day. It is one, in fact, countenanced by the earlier histories of the republic, but which has of late by more perfect investigation been rendered wholly untenable. There was a perplexity, an intricacy of dispute and division for Washington and his compeers to unravel, such as we have never seen. None but heroic hearts could ever have looked upon the path which lay before them without despair; and I may add that none but the giants which our country saw in that hour of distress, could have trodden that path with success and with glory. There were, unquestionably, real oppositions of interest between the different sections of the country; as unquestionably were there honest divisions of opinion upon great principles of government: add to these the disputes about details which always spring up in legislative bodies, and the voice of faction, which was hushed not even during our Revolution; and we gather some faint idea of the dark prospect before the friends of the Constitution. Let us listen to such parts of the discussions as have come down to us. Edmund Randolph, of Virginia, denounced the plan of a single Executive as "the fætus of Monarchy," and was for a time supported by the votes of New York, Delaware and Maryland. Alexander Hamilton expressed doubts about a republican government at all, and his admiration of a limited Monarchy; he closed by proposing to elect the Senate and President of the United



States *during good behaviour*, or, in other words, *for life*. His plan, at least as far as regarded the President, was, at one stage of the proceedings, favored by a vote of New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The smaller States insisted upon their rights, as sovereign communities, to an equal representation with the larger ones, in one branch, at least, of the National Legislature. This was strenuously resisted by the great States, and, having once been rejected, was only carried, after long debate, by a vote of five States to four. South Carolina and Georgia absolutely refused to come into the union if the Slave Trade with Africa was abolished; and their determination reduced the others to a compromise, by which this traffic was secured up to the year 1808. South Carolina insisted that her slaves should be entitled to an equal representation in Congress with free white citizens. The North replied, that all descriptions of her property were equally entitled. After much violence upon both sides, Mr. Williamson, of this State, proposed, as a compromise, that three-fifths of the slave population should be entitled to representation. This was carried; New Jersey and Delaware voting against it; South Carolina and Massachusetts being divided, the former desiring them to be fully represented, and the latter not at all. It will be seen from this vote, that the compromise upon this question of slavery was effected exclusively by neither North nor South; one State from each of these sections voting against it, and one from each losing its vote by a division of its representatives. The decision of this question affords a good insight into the history of the Convention. We find that the advocates of extreme views, however diametrically opposed in their policy to each other, uniformly united against the propositions of the moderate. Some of the opponents of the Constitution contended that it went too far in the powers which it conferred upon the General Government; the opposition of these gentlemen was strengthened by that of those who contended that it did not go far enough. Some declaimed upon the amount to which

particular subjects were compromised ; others insisted with warmth that too little of that spirit had been exhibited. In opposition to the views just mentioned as those of Edmund Randolph, Charles Pinckney, of South Carolina, stigmatised the weakness of the proposed President as contemptible. On several occasions the Convention was upon the point of adjourning without having effected its purpose. Especially was this the case in the debates as to the constitution of the Senate between the large and small States. Luther Martin, and the delegates from New York, excepting Hamilton, retired from it in disgust; and I have before observed that some of the members never did give their signatures to the draft. By moderation and compromise upon the part of most, the immortal victory was at length obtained, and this Republic given to the world. After sixty-one years of glad experience, we are privileged to declare calmly and with all confidence, that there never yet was the country which so entirely belied the forebodings of its enemies ; that there never yet was the country that so completely deserved the hearty allegiance of its citizens ; that there never yet was one whose course was so constantly and so unmistakably upwards, or that had the prospect of so brilliant a career for the future. At this day we can hardly forbear smiling at the objections frequently proposed by some of the ablest men in the Convention ; and it may be remarked, that the amendments as to the tenure of office for the President and Senate, proposed by Alexander Hamilton, have entirely failed in the South American Republics to impart that stability to government which he anticipated from their adoption in our Federal Constitution. Mr. Hamilton was, perhaps, the very ablest man in that congress of genius. He was then hardly thirty years of age, and it is well known that afterwards he gave an unqualified support to the Constitution which was adopted by the Convention.

We have a report of the proceedings of the Convention in this State which rejected the Constitution in 1788. Some of the objections then made were well grounded, and were after-

wards engrafted upon that instrument as amendments; very few, however! while the great mass was such as no sound man with common information would venture to propose at this day. The Convention contained the first men of the time in North Carolina; and while the influence of Willie Jones, Samuel Spencer, David Caldwell and Timothy Bloodworth was exerted against the adoption of the proposed Constitution, its provisions were ably defended by Samuel Johnston, (at that time Governor,) James Iredell, Archibald Maclaine, Richard Dobbs Spaight, William Barry Grove, John Steele and William Richardson Davie. Although the leaders of the opposition adduced reasons of weight for their rejection of the labors of the Convention which had drafted the Constitution, it must be admitted that much misapprehension, unworthy suspicion, and gross ignorance and confusion pervaded the rank and file. Mr. Goudy, of Guilford, said that he did not wish to be represented by negroes—alluding to the provision which gives the Southern States additional representatives for their slave population. If his objections could have prevailed upon the country to blot out that clause, the South would lose twenty of her present representatives in Congress, and North Carolina would have seven instead of nine. Mr. Joseph McDowell would not permit to the General Government the power of laying taxes; he argued that any income which could be raised by a tariff must be trifling, and hence poll taxes would be very high; he proceeded to give a highly colored picture of the tyranny which would be the necessary result. Other members agreed with him in his forebodings. The experience of the country during peace has always been, that any amount of revenue may be raised by a tariff; and in practice the only question has been, how this power may be exercised within proper limits. Mr. Loeke said that he “considered the Constitution neither safe nor beneficial, as it granted powers unbounded without restrictions.” Mr. Bass “took a general view of the original and appellate jurisdiction of the Federal Courts. He considered

the Constitution neither necessary nor proper. He feared that under the Federal Courts dreadful oppression would be committed by carrying people too great a distance to decide trivial causes. For his part he could not understand the Constitution, although he took great pains to find out its meaning, and although he flattered himself with the possession of common sense. He wished to reflect on no gentleman, and apologized for his ignorance, by observing that he never went to school, and had been born blind. Mr. Abbot said, that some people feared that, as the President and Senate could bind the nation by a treaty with foreign powers, they might make a treaty to adopt the Roman Catholic religion in the United States, which would prevent the people from worshipping God according to their own consciences. Many, he went on to say, wished to know what religion shall be established. He believed that a majority of the people were Presbyterians. For his part he was opposed to any exclusive establishment, but if there were any, he would prefer the Episcopal. He added that many thought the exclusion of religious tests dangerous and impolitic. They suppose, if there be no religious test required, Pagans, Deists and Mahometans might obtain office amongst us, and that the Senate and Representatives might all be Pagans. Every person employed by the General and State Governments is to take an oath to support the former. Some are desirous to know how and by whom they are to swear, since no religious tests are required; whether they are to swear by Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Proserpine, or Pluto!

My object, fellow citizens, in this particular conjuncture of public affairs, in dwelling at length upon this portion of our history, is, I hope, apparent to all. Our country was cradled amid storms such as her subsequent history has not again seen. Wildness of language and bitterness of denunciation were used with regard to her probable character, such as have hardly been equalled in this day of reproach and obloquy. But amid all, the good hearts of Washington and his



compatriots never failed them ; and when the heat and dust of the battle were over, all joined in acknowledging the victory to be theirs. If they, to secure blessings which at least were only probable, animated only by hope for the future, could be so prudent, so persevering, so laborious ; what is not demanded of us in behalf of a liberty now grown old, of blessings long enjoyed, and with all the encouragements of the past and the sympathy of the present, amid heats, at worst, only transitory, and which have not come to us, as to our fathers, by legions ? If they, for a people which were not a people, for a union not yet united, dared and did so much ; why may we not adventure something of our leisure and ease to save what they procured ? They made mutual surrender of dear and undoubted rights ; they even compromised questions which our over-punctilious chivalry might associate with their honor ; and from that investment have had large return of enduring and best deserved glory. The least that we can do for our country is, laying aside all notions of duty and affection, as a mere cold-blooded speculation, to try the same policy which has resulted in the abounding wealth of their reputation. If we do, whatever be the innate sordidness of our natures, it may turn out that a coming age shall hail us as patriots second only to those of 1787 !

A French historian very properly remarks, that Napoleon never reached a prouder eminence than when, in 1802, having restored victory to the French arms—every where during his Egyptian expedition foul with disaster, having negotiated an honorable peace with Great Britain—he turned his attention to the reorganization of France, reconciled her to the Church, restored a healthy tone to the finances, projected an extensive scheme of popular education, and published the system of Law known as the Napoleon Code. It was afterwards, it is true, that he conquered proud Austria, demolished Prussia, and sacked the metropolis of the Northern Cæsar ; but he who truly appreciates the magnitude of his for-

tunes, will pronounce that their star culminated amid the peaceful occupations of 1802. So, with more truth, may we say, that, to the philosopher, **GEORGE WASHINGTON** appears so great at no period of his life, as when he was soothing and moderating the animosities of the Convention of 1787. By his wisdom and valor he had given to his country peace and independence; he had adready discharged all that was due to her, and his generation would have risen up and called him blessed, had his labors closed with the resignation of his military command. But God had a still nobler work for him to accomplish; and it was ordered that he should not only provide for the sovereignty of his country, but place her in a path of honor and happiness that may be prolonged to the most distant generations.

“ Oh victor, unsurpassed in modern song !  
 Each year brings forth its millions, yet how long  
 Time and its generations shall roll on,  
 And not the whole combined and countless throng  
 Compose a mind like thine ? though all in one  
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun ! ”

It is very true that we have no such high mission upon earth as our fathers had. So much the greater obligation upon us, then, clearly to fulfil it ! It is impossible that in a country like ours there shall not be real and important differences of interest. We measure it by many degree of latitude and longitude. When the beams of the early morning are just breaking upon Oregon City and the Bay of San Francisco, the sun has mounted already more than three hours high upon Boston. Leaving a shore upon the waters of the Atlantic of a thousand leagues, and advancing with the rush of our population and the setting sun over three thousand miles of mountain, river, plain and forest—over every square inch of which our **FLAG** flies supreme, we find our Eagle screaming, and asserting dominion throughout twenty degrees of latitude along the Great South Sea. It is the merest stupidity and folly not to be certain that over such an ex-

tent of territory, among a people of ever active intellect, there shall not be grave diversities of opinion upon almost every subject. But these are not necessarily fatal to our Confederacy. Those of us who have travelled in rail cars and steam boats will recollect to have been somewhat startled at first by their jar and shudder; but in no long time their other advantages completely reconciled us to the slight inconvenience, and meanwhile we were whirled upon our course with a rapidity which put to shame the clouds and the wind. As our Country speeds her citizens along untrodden tracks of peaceful glory, outstripping in her bright career all ancient and modern competitors, his must be a captious and minute mind that can afford him leisure among these thousand blessings of home, liberty and religion, to calculate whether she varies from her course by the millionth part of a degree, or to value the exceeding accuracy of those metaphysical faculties which can “distinguish and divide *a hair*, twixt west and north-west side.” We must make up our minds to anticipate disputes with our brethren, and we must prepare ourselves beforehand with that temper in which they should be conducted. We must pay frequent visits to the graves of our fathers, and consult their spirits upon the difficulties which surround us. The answer to the sincere inquirer will not be in vain. So long as we can reproduce in our own breasts their thoughts and feelings, the Republic will be safe. The times may demand of us to speak plainly, and to act with firmness: the dictates of liberty were never yet reconcilable with tame submission to undoubted injury, and he who inquires for such a response from the mighty dead of our Revolution, will inquire in vain! If I am asked what, in practice, is that nice medium of firmness and compromise which should be resorted to upon such occasions, I can give no answer so complete, or, as I trust, so satisfactory to my audience, as by reference to the pages of Inspiration. I hope that, to them, it would appear an unwarranted neglect upon my part, if I did not confess that, however upon days such

as this there is much matter for boasting and congratulation, there is still more for meditation and humble thankfulness to the Giver of all Good, for having distinguished our history with a series of providences the like of which I challenge any country to produce. And I may say specially, that I am unable to solve the problem here presented, as to what is the proper degree of submission which one sovereign and high spirited State may make to another, or a common cause, otherwise than by the formula given in the New Testament—"Do to others as you would have them do to you." In carrying this fully out, there can be no fear of degradation upon one side, or of ill-advised and fatal rupture on the other. I know, fellow citizens, that I take you all with me, when I assert that the Christian Religion is at the deep foundation of every political privilege we enjoy ; and that according as its lessons are followed or despised, so will our civil liberty rise to perfection, or sink into nothing. Above all, we should avoid hasty counsels. To one engaged in controversy, anger is hardly better than folly, and in their results they are generally the same. How, I beseech you, how shall we answer at the bar of posterity, if arraigned upon a charge of having dissolved this Union in a fit of hasty, ill-considered and uncalled for ill temper? When God gave to Solomon wisdom, he added thereto "largeness of heart ;" and I can sum up my meaning no better than by quoting a remarkable passage from a speech delivered by Edmund Burke, in behalf of our colonial rights, in the British Parliament: "MAGNANIMITY IN POLITICS IS NOT SELDOM THE TRUEST WISDOM, AND A GREAT EMPIRE AND LITTLE MINDS GO ILL TOGETHER."

Fellow citizens, you have kindly lent me your attention while I endeavored, with some confusion, I fear, to trace the foundation of this republic, in the compromise of important principles and the surrender of dear rights. You have recognized, I trust, that in the preservation among our people of the spirit which gave life to our Constitution, is our only hope of preserving the Constitution itself ; and may I not indulge the belief that you are resolved henceforward, in all questions of



general dispute and difficulty, to consult and abide by the Oracles of the Revolution? A few words more, and I shall have done.

The period of three quarters of a century which includes our history, is in many respects one of the most remarkable in all time. It has witnessed tremendous overthrows of empires, revolutions in opinion no less important, advances in science that are unparalleled, and there is no department in which the mind has not advanced from conquest to conquest as with the steps of a giant, or through which it does not stand ready, rejoicing like a strong man, to run a race. Very difficult is it for us, living in this blaze of the nineteenth century, to realize the situation of men who lived within the last hundred years. ‘‘We can hardly conceive the revolution we should experience were we suddenly carried back to the condition of the patriarchs of the Old Thirteen. Fancy their rude cabins thinly scattered through the dreary wilderness, the small patches of half-cleared and half-tilled land around them, the solemn silence of the boundless wood scarce broken but by the echoing strokes of the axe; follow through the dark and gloomy forest, the rugged, steep and winding foot-path that formed the only means of communication with the distant neighbor; remember that they had neither church nor school, no physician to heal such maladies as art can master, or to relieve the dying pangs of the incurable; no man of God to smooth the passage to the tomb. Observe the Father of the family at his heavy toil in felling the woods and breaking up the virgin earth. How rude his implements, how formidable the resistance of the primitive forest, how slow his conquest of the untamed soil! Compare his clumsy plough, his ill-forged axe and his heavy hoe, with the light, well-balanced and neatly finished tools of his descendants. Watch him as he painfully bears upon his shoulders, or drags upon a hand-sled, a full day’s journey to the distant mill, the bushel of grain that is to furnish a scanty supply for his famishing family. Remember, too, that with all this toil he was compelled to be ever ready with loaded musket to repel

the lurking savage, and believe, if you can, that such is a picture of the lives of your fathers, and that the now smiling fields and verdant hills of our Southern States were its theatre." We must also recollect that it was after the commencement of our Revolutionary war, that James Watt invented the Steam-engine. In 1776, Steam boats, Steam cars and Steam mills had never been dreamed of. In August 1774, within a month of the day when the Old Congress met at Philadelphia, Joseph Priestley, by the discovery of a subtle air, to which was given the name of Oxygen Gas, extended the foundations of Chemistry, and thereby conferred a mass of benefits upon mankind which follow us into every day life, and which would consume a volume in their enumeration. In 1775, Werner, a German, gave form for the first time to Geology, and in so doing afforded a fulcrum, by which some of the most important and best established opinions in physical science have been thrown to the ground. What shall I add concerning the Electric Telegraph, the obscure and fascinating subject of Magnetism, or the multiform ingenuity displayed in mechanical invention;—the cotton gin, the spinning jenny, and many other most valuable aids to labour which it would be literally wearisome to recall? Such is the appearance which a hasty glance at the history of science for the last seventy-five years presents. Turn to the political world. Poland, with her millions of subjects, has disappeared forever. Three revolutions have almost destroyed the personal identity of France. Germany, ravaged for twenty years by the most disastrous wars, has lost her political character, and even while I address you, with fear of change perplexes monarchs. Great Britain has balanced her losses here by winning an immense empire in the remote East; whilst, on the other hand, the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro have been wrenched from Spain in this Western World, and where in Central and South America allegiance was paid to his Most Faithful Majesty over three millions of square miles, the gaudy banners of a dozen so called republics fitfully wave in the southern breeze.

But, fellow citizens, wherever we turn our eyes, whatever be the triumph of science, or of human ingenuity which we contemplate, we claim, with sober satisfaction, that nothing has been effected for the family of man at all comparable with the establishment of this Republic. True it is that space has been annihilated; that labor has been alleviated; fire and water yoked into service as a steady pair, hurrying the trade and wealth of the sea-coast, thousands of miles into the interior, among the recesses of our mountain chains; that the lightning has been fain to take office under the Administration as an humble subordinate in the Post-Office Department; and that what were the expensive luxuries of affluence one hundred years ago, are the ordinary comforts of the poor man's cottage to-day. But great as are these advances, how will they for one moment compare with the magnificent hopes which have been inspired in the breast of humanity by the past history and present position of these United States? These are the proud trophies of a well employed freedom; but our high mission is to sow freedom itself broadcast throughout the world! If the Grecian States, in ruin for centuries, and Rome, which two thousand years ago had lost her liberty; the broken stories of which we gather only in the scanty records of dead languages; if *these* were able to inflame the patriot, and nerve the arm of glorious revolution in past time; if these, *in misfortune and despair*, were able to dissolve strong governments, and melt the chains of the oppressed by the mere spark which lingered among their ashes; what shall be the effect of the noon tide splendor and uninterrupted good fortune of this Grest Western Light? What fancy can surpass the facts which demand our attention here? I appeal to history. Our example has converted France, the proudest of the old monarchies, unto a republic; it has liberalized all western Europe, and enfranchised the larger portion of South America. Literally may we apply the words of Holy Writ: "The kings were assembled, they passed by together; they saw it and so they marvelled, they were troubled and hasted away." There is no kindred nor tongue where the language of this

luminary is not heard, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. When in November, 1789, North Carolina acceded to the Union, it was composed of States, with a single exception, lying on the Atlantic. To-day, after a lapse of sixty years, her Senators and Representatives are discussing the admission of a young and wealthy territory lying on the Pacific, and fronting the ancient empire of China. I presume that it is not generally recollected that this territory, some three thousand miles to our west, was originally a part of North Carolina. In the charter given by Charles the Second of England to certain of his courtiers, Carolina contained all the land lying between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans within the parallels of  $29^{\circ}$  and  $36\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  of North Latitude. Its northern limits entered the Pacific at the bay of Monterey, only a few miles south of that of San Francisco, and is famous as the line of the Missouri Compromise. Its boundaries contained the present States of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, almost all Texas, a large part of Florida; a large part of the territories of Old and New California, and New Mexico; and portions of the Mexican provinces of Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila. This magnificent grant, feeding at present five millions of inhabitants, was made in consideration of a yearly rent of sixty-four dollars and thirty-seven cents, together with one fourth of all the silver and gold ore which might be found within it. Although this might during late years have been a respectable income, yet it is well known that the royal donor never realized anything from his stipulated return, no gold or silver having been discovered within these bounds—at least to any considerable amount—until after the Revolution. Such continued to be the limits of Carolina until the Peace of 1763, when the land lying west of the Mississippi was ceded by Great Britain to France. Having subsequently become the property of Spain, it participated in the revolt which some thirty years ago resulted in the erection of the republic of Mexico; our own eyes have seen a large part of it reannexed to the destinies of its parent State.

SUCH IS OUR COUNTRY! Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth. And every where; among the busy cities of the East, in the crowded marts of the Middle States, along the Lakes of the North, beneath the orange groves of the South, on the rushing rivers of the West, in the ancient Spanish city of the Holy Faith, by the shores of the Land of Gold, and where the Columbia swiftly descends from the perpetual snow of the Great Chain; *every where*, is this day held in glad remembrance; all other business, and all other pleasure stand still, in order that many millions of Freemen may keep holy-day in honor of the FOURTH DAY OF JULY 1776: Every where is the name of WASHINGTON mentioned with solemn reverence; every where loud plaudits greet the mention of Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Nathaniel Greene, Richard Henry Lee, the Marquis La Fayette, and their kindred heroes; everywhere the sigh of deep and generous sympathy is heaved to the memory of Warren, Nash, De Kalb, Montgomery and Pulaski; every where congratulations are exchanged upon the prosperity of the country and the continuation of our Free Institutions; and every where, from Maine to California, from Wisconsin to Florida, the discordant cries of faction and fanaticism are hushed before that mighty swell of patriotic emotion which witnesses that it is ONE PEOPLE that pays allegiance to the Constitution of the United States.

NOTE. It is proper to say that I am indebted for the facts relating to the proceedings of the Convention of 1787, to a late History of the United States, by Richard Hildreth, Esq., of Boston. For much that is specially connected with North Carolina, I acknowledge my obligations to the Collections which President SWAIN has made for the HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY.















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